This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

C O N F I D E N T I A L COLOMBO 001157

SIPDIS

OFFICIAL INFORMAL

FOR SA/INS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/12/14
TAGS: AMGT CE MV LTTE
SUBJECT: OFFICIAL INFORMAL NUMBER 091 (07/12/04)

Classified by Ambassador Jeffrey J. Lunstead for reasons 1.5
d and g.

Contents: Son of a Gun

First It's the Ship, Now the Gun

¶1. (C) With the issue of paying for the Coast Guard Cutter
settled, the SLN is now arguing about what kind of gun to
put on it. The gun the USN has suggested, a Swedish model,
will run about $5 mill with ammunition. The SLN is balking
at this, saying they just don't have that kind of money.
While trying to see what they can come up with, they are
also running into a deadline issue -- the Swedes wanted an
answer by July 7. Our understanding is that the SL Embassy
has requested from the USN a 30-day extension of the
deadline so they can try to structure a deal. The option is
to buy a cheaper gun (Chinese?) but that has seve3rla
disadvantages: (1) may be difficult to mount and (2) may not
be available in time to mount before the cutter leaves for
SL. The SLN does not want the cutter to arrive here without
a gun.

¶2. (C) The deal which is being proposed is:

(1) the GSL uses about $1 million in unused FMF to pay for
part of the gun, and
(2) they reduce the ammunition order, which is a large part
of the cost.

This could bring the total cost down to something they could
afford. We have told them that we cannot get them a better
price on the equipment itself, as the gun is being sold by
the Swedes, not by us.

¶3. (C) We are not sure where this stands now, but it would
be a shame to have spent all of the effort on the Cutter,
only to have the deal go sour over the gun. Any info you can
provide from your side would be useful.

¶4. (C) Meanwhile, LTTE political chief Tamilchelvan
complained to a Tamil newspaper that we were upsetting the
military balance by the cutter sale and other activities.
Well, at least we got their attention.

LUNSTEAD